

cistern is the Royal or Basilike Cistern, begun by Constantine and restored by Justinian, which is called by the Turks Yeri Batan Serai, or the Underground Palace. This is supported by three hundred and thirty-six columns, standing twelve feet apart in twenty-eight symmetrical rows. The cistern is three hundred and ninety feet long and a hundred and seventy-four feet wide, and still supplies water from the Aqueduct of Valens as fresh as when its first stone was laid.

The chief glories of Constantinople, however, were the Hippodrome and the churches. With the latter we may deal very briefly, the more so because the world-renowned St. Sophia is not the St. Sophia which Constantine built, but the work of Justinian. Constantine's church, on which he and many of his successors lavished their treasures, was burnt to the ground and utterly consumed in the tumult of the Nika which laid half the city in ashes. Nor had St. Sophia been intended to be the metropolitan church. That distinction belonged to the church which Constantine had dedicated not to the Wisdom but to the Peace of God, to St. Irene. It, too, shared the fate of the sister church in the tumult of the Nika, and was similarly rebuilt by Justinian. This was regarded as the Patriarchal church and called by that name, for here the Patriarch conducted the daily services, since the church had no clergy of its own. It was at the high altar of St. Irene that the Patriarch Alexander in 335 prayed day and night that God would choose between himself and Arius; while the answer.—or what was taken for the answer—was delivered